

Gyalrong languages

Gyalrong or **rGyalrong** (Tibetan: རྒྱལ་རྩེ་རྩེ་རྩེ་, Wylie: *rgyal rong*, THL: *gyalrong*), also rendered **Jiarong** (simplified Chinese: 嘉绒语; traditional Chinese: 嘉絨語; pinyin: *jiāróng yǔ*), or sometimes **Gyarung**, is a subbranch of the Gyalrongic languages spoken by the Gyalrong people in Western Sichuan, China.

Contents
Name
Languages
Demographics
References
Further reading
External links

Name

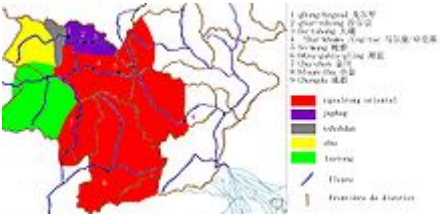
The name *Gyalrong* is an abbreviation of Tibetan ཤར་རྒྱལ་མོ་ཚ་བ་རྩེ་, *shar rgyal-mo tsha-ba rong* “Eastern Queen’s Fever Ravine”, a historical region of Kham now mostly located inside Ngawa Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan.^[3] This Tibetan word is transcribed in Chinese as 嘉绒 or 嘉戎 or 嘉荣, *jiāróng*. It is pronounced [rʈʂoŋ] by speakers of Situ. It is a place-name and is not used by the people to designate their own language. The autonym is pronounced [kəru] in Situ and [kʷru] in Japhug. Gyalrong speakers were previously classified as an independent ethnicity but were merged into the Tibetan ethnicity by the Chinese government in 1954.^[4]

Languages

Based on mutual intelligibility, Gates (2014)^[5] considers there to be five Gyalrong languages:

- Situ (Chinese: *Situ*, 四土话) or less precisely Eastern Gyalrong
- Japhug (Chinese: *Chapu*, 茶堡)
- Tshobdun (Chinese: *Caodeng*, 草登; along with Zbu, next, also called *Sidaba*)
- Zbu (Chinese: *Ribu*, 日部, also Rdzong'bur or Showu)
- Gyalrong (south-central)

Gyalrong	
Native to	China
Region	Sichuan
Native speakers	83,000 (1999) ^[1]
Language family	Sino-Tibetan <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Qiangic<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Gyalrongic<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Gyalrong
Dialects	Situ Japhug Tshobdun Zbu
Writing system	Tibetan script
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	jya
Glottolog	core1262 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/core1262) ^[2]



Map of Gyalrong languages

Situ has more than 100,000 speakers throughout a widespread area, while the other three languages, all spoken in Barkam, have fewer than 10,000 speakers each.^[6] They are all tonal except for Japhug.

Most early studies on Gyalrong languages (Jin 1949, Nagano 1984, Lin 1993) focused on various dialects of Situ, and the three other languages were not studied in detail until the last decade of the 20th century. The differences between the four languages are presented here in a table of cognates. The data from Situ is taken from Huang and Sun 2002, the Japhug and Showu data from Jacques (2004, 2008) and the Tshobdun data from Sun (1998, 2006).

gloss	<u>Situ</u>	<u>Japhug</u>	<u>Tshobdun</u>	<u>Showu</u>
badger	pés	βɣws	ɣves	təvís
dream	ta-rmô	tw-jmŋo	te-jmi?	te-lme?
I saw		pw-mtó-t-a	ne-mti-aŋ	
sheep	kəjó	qazo	qe ʃji?	ɕie?

Gyalrong languages, unlike most Sino-Tibetan languages, are polysynthetic languages and present typologically interesting features, such as inverse marking (Sun and Shi 2002, Jacques 2010), ideophones (Sun 2004, Jacques 2008), and verbal stem alternations (Sun 2000, 2004, Jacques 2004, 2008). See Situ language for an example of the latter.

Demographics

Gates (2012: 102-106)^[7] lists the following demographic information for 5 rGyalrong languages. Altogether, there are about 85,000 speakers for all 5 languages combined.

Language	Speakers	Villages	Dialects	Alternate names	Locations
<u>Situ</u>	35,000-40,000	57	7+	rGyalrong, kəru, roŋba	almost entirely in Barkam County; NE Jinchuan County; NW Li County
rGyalrong, South-central	33,000 (out of 45,000 ethnic people)	111	3+	rGyalrong, roŋba	Xiaojin, Danba, and Baoxing Counties
<u>Japhug</u>	4,000-5,000	19			3 townships in NE Barkam County, namely Lóng'ěrjiǎ, Dàzàng, and Shǎ'ěrzōng
<u>Tshobdun</u>	3,000	10		stodpask ^h ət	Caodeng/Tsho-bdun (WT Tshobdun) Township, Barkam County
<u>Zbu</u>	6,000+	28		stodpask ^h ət	Barkam, Rangtang, Seda, and Aba counties

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3. Bennett, Daniel, *Rgyalrong Conservation and Change: Social Change On the Margins* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=pPBaCAAQBAJ&lpg=PT24&pg=PT24>), p. 24

4. 《嘉絨藏族民俗志》，李茂，李忠俊著，p. 44
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External links

- Guillaume Jacques, Overview of Rgyalrong languages (<https://www.academia.edu/969613/Rgyalrong>)
 - rGyalrongic Languages Database (<http://htq.minpaku.ac.jp/databases/rGyalrong/>)
 - Proto-rGyalrong reconstruction (<https://sites.google.com/site/sinotibetanbranches/eastern/rgyalrong>) (Sino-Tibetan Branches Project)
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